



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

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March 26, 2014

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

On behalf of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the more than 104,000 osteopathic physicians and osteopathic medical students we represent, we write to thank you for introducing the "Commonsense Medicare SGR Repeal and Beneficiary Access Improvement Act of 2014" (S. 2157), and to express our support of the legislation.

This legislation represents the culmination of months of bicameral, bipartisan efforts by all three health care committees in Congress to develop policy to replace the flawed Medicare payment formula. We support the bill's approach to reform of the Medicare physician payment system that includes permanent repeal of the sustainable growth rate (SGR), a period of stability with 0.5 percent positive updates for all physicians for five years, incentives for transitioning to alternative payment models that include the Patient-Centered Medical Home, and an opportunity for physician organizations and specialty societies to develop their own alternative payment models--all within the next decade.

Today we find ourselves with Medicare physician payment policy that is jeopardizing access to physician services for our growing senior population, and threatening the overall financial security of the program. While recognizing the cost of a permanent solution to this dilemma remains substantial, we have already spent more than \$150 billion in the last decade on temporary patches to avert payment cuts. There is finally bipartisan and bicameral agreement that our nation can no longer afford to simply "kick the can down the road," and must place Medicare on a fiscally stable path by enacting your legislation.

Thank you again for your hard work in introducing this legislation that can finally bring this important issue to a successful conclusion. Correcting this ongoing problem is in the best interest of Congress, physicians, and, most importantly, patients. We believe this is the time to achieve a permanent solution. The AOA and our members stand ready to assist you in securing its enactment into law.

Sincerely,

Norman Vinn, DO  
President